

HUNTING THE HUN.

IN **BRITISH** SOUTH WEST AFRICA.

By W.H. KIRBY:

A Series
of Sketches
on the Humourous
side of the
G. S. W. A.
Campaign.

(By one who was there).



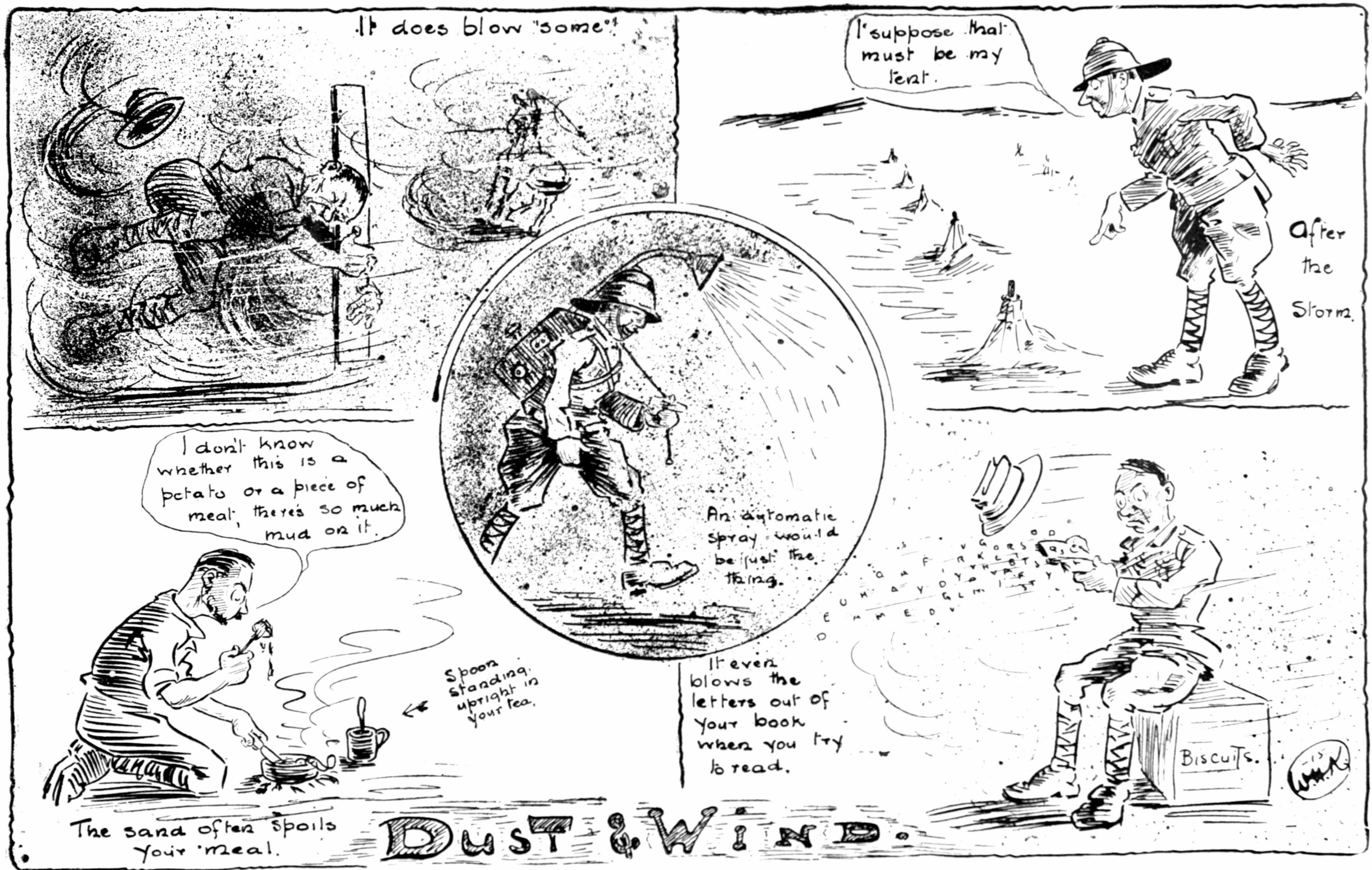
Introduction.

IN submitting this collection of original sketches dealing with the experiences of the Defence Force troops in the recent campaign in German South-West Africa, the Argus Printing and Publishing Company feel sure that they will be appreciated, not only by the men who served under General Botha's banner, but by everyone interested in the welfare and advancement of the Union and the Empire. The sketches are the work of Mr. W. H. Kirby, who was the artist for the "Sporting Star" until the outbreak of the war, and whose work is well known to dwellers in Johannesburg and on the Reef, and was an outstanding feature in the Saturday night issues of that popular paper. Mr. Kirby joined the Natal Light Horse at the beginning of the trouble, and went through the Rebellion and the G.S.-W.A. campaign, being wounded in the Gibeon fight. Latterly the N.L.H. formed part of the 9th Mounted Brigade. Very shortly Mr. Kirby hopes to be "doing his bit" in Europe, and his numerous friends wish him the very best of luck in a larger sphere. The sketches illustrate the humorous side of military events as seen through the artist's eyes, and for the benefit of all classes explanatory letterpress accompanies each picture.



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We do not think the above pictures need any explanation. The public are fairly well acquainted with this particular subject. Ask those who have been there.



(1) What he expects to find in G.S.W.A.

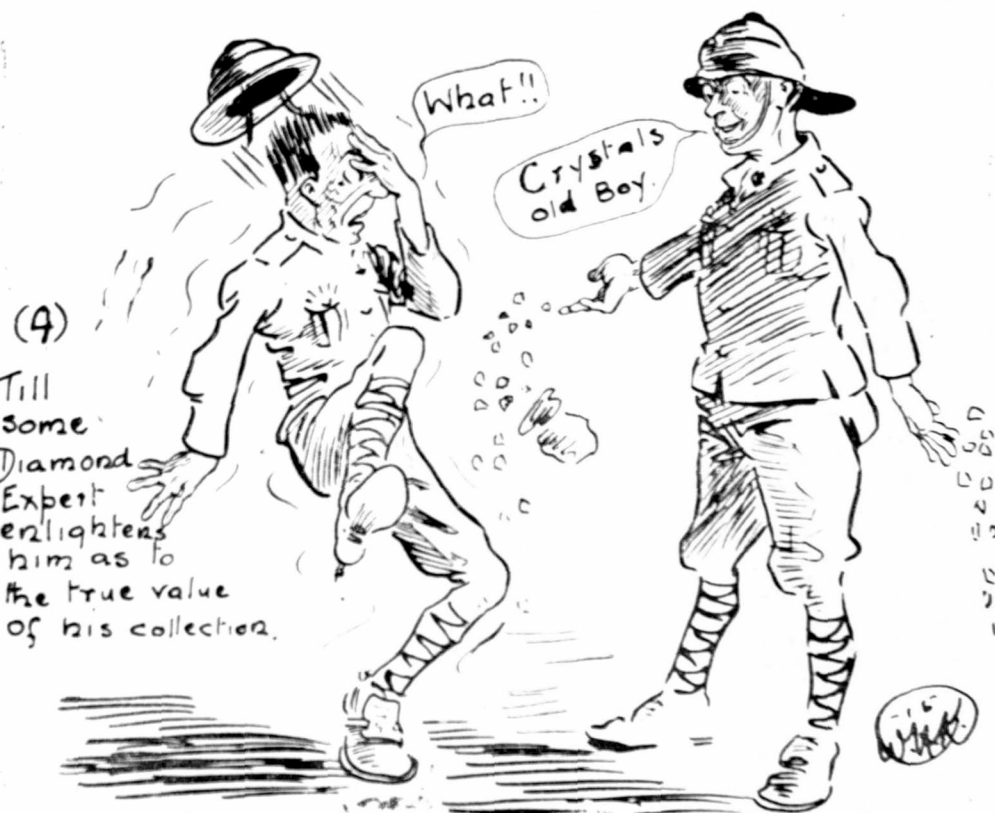
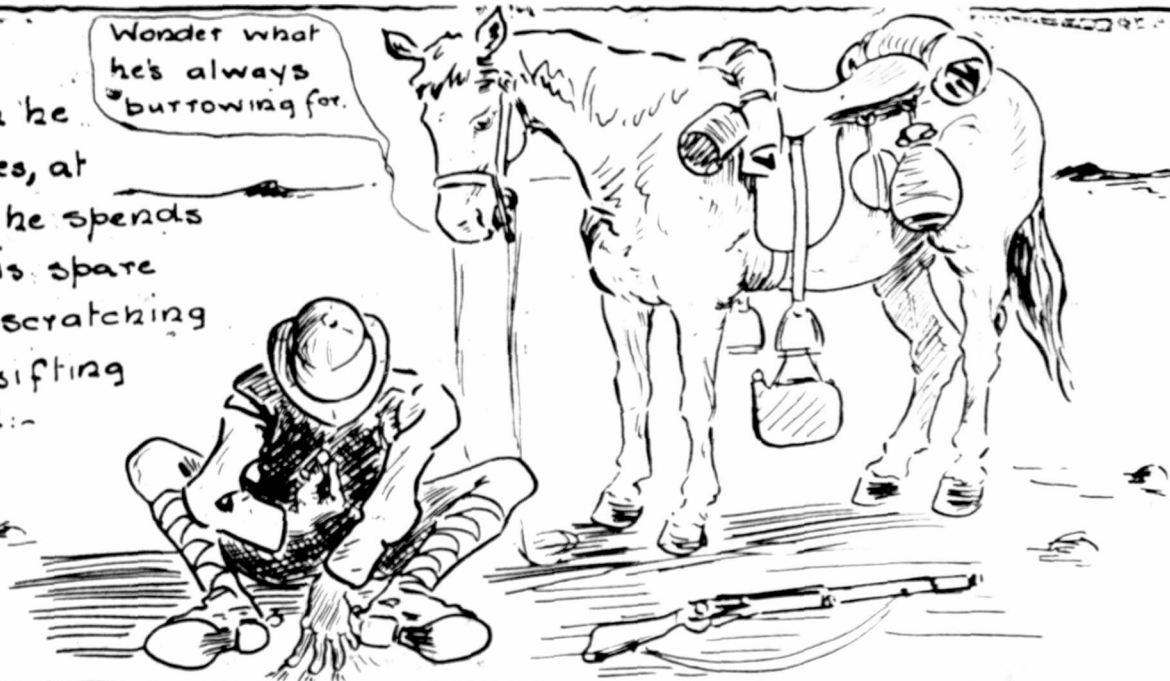
DIAMONDS IN G.S.W.A.

(3). And generally gets a fine collection of stones before long. He imagines himself becoming a millionaire shortly.



(2) When he arrives, at first he spends all his spare time scratching and sifting sand.

Wonder what he's always burrowing for.



(4) Till some Diamond Expert enlightens him as to the true value of his collection.

Many who had not been in the country before probably imagined that diamonds could be picked up anywhere. As far as we know, they are only found in certain parts on or near the coast. This, however, did not prevent enthusiasts continuing the search far inland. Many were the "finds," which generally turned out to be crystals.



"FULL MARCHING ORDER"

In spite of the fact that the mounted men reduced the weight on their horses to a minimum, they generally appeared to have brought *all* their belongings with them. A distinctive feature of a body of mounted men on the move, especially when trotting or cantering, was the rattle of "billy-cans" and other cooking utensils.



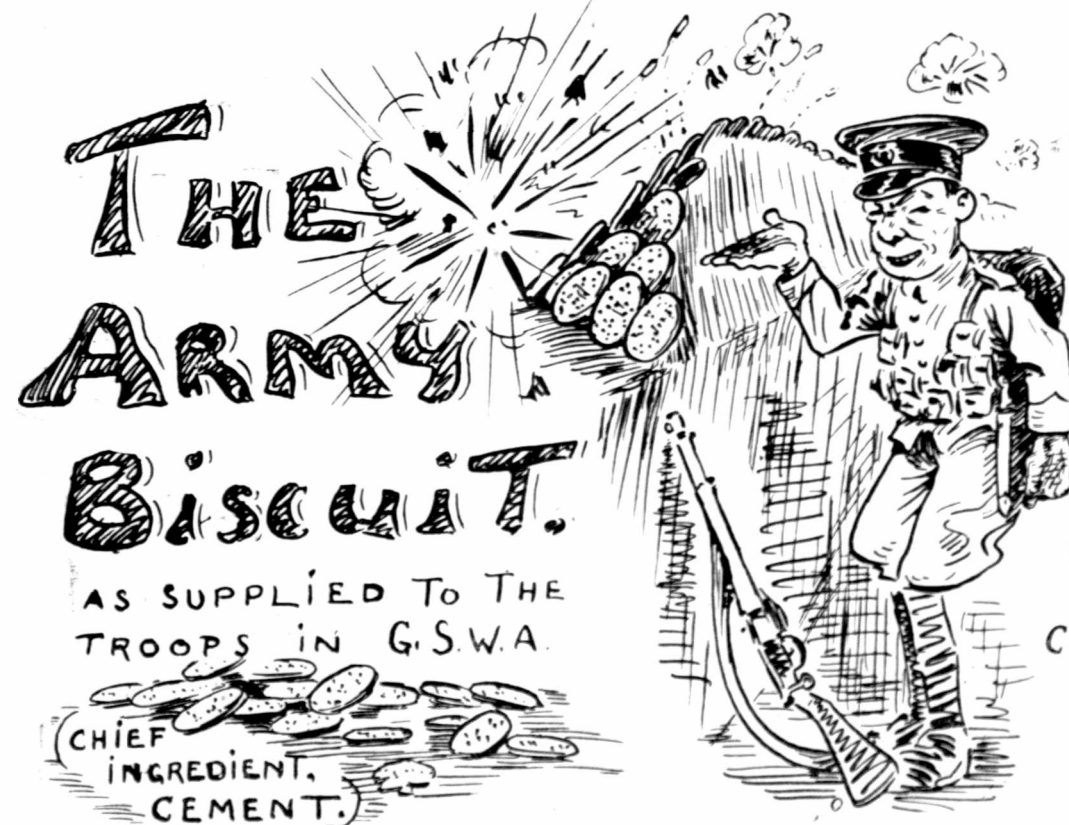
ON NO ACCOUNT SHOULD YOU ATTEMPT TO BITE IT. IT IS NOT MEANT TO BE EATEN.



IF YOU MUST HAVE NOURISHMENT, FIRST SPEND AN HOUR OR TWO WITH IT IN THIS WAY.



AFTER THAT, TRY A FEW HUNDRED ROUNDS ON IT. YOU MAY THEN HAVE KNOCKED OFF ENOUGH SPLINTERS TO MAKE A MEAL.



THE ARMY Biscuit.

AS SUPPLIED TO THE TROOPS IN G.S.W.A.

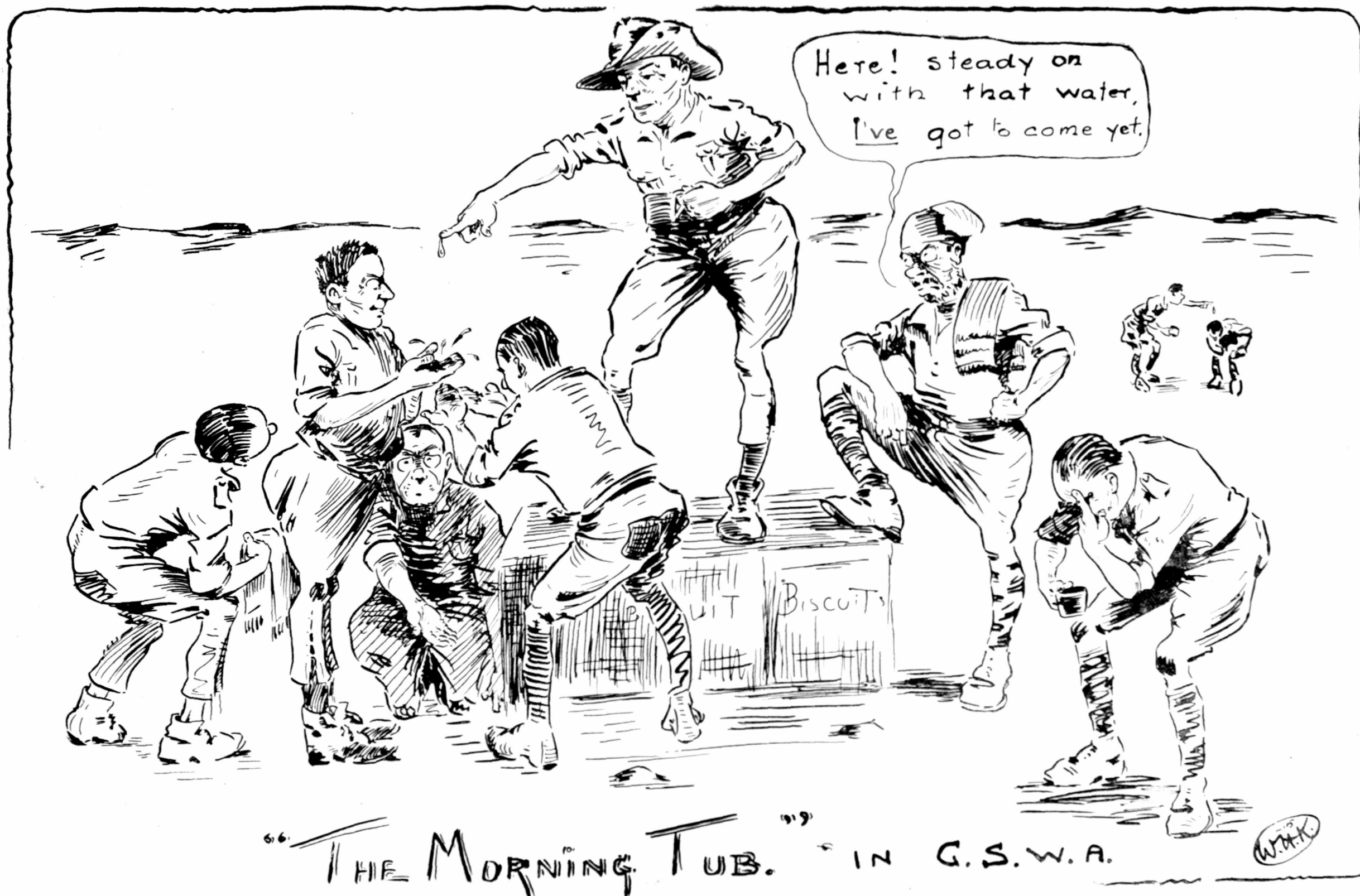
(CHIEF INGREDIENT, CEMENT.)

ON ACCOUNT OF ITS BULLET-PROOF NATURE, AND GENERAL INDISTRUCTIBILITY, WE SUGGEST THAT IT SHOULD BE USED TO PROTECT EARTH-WORKS ON THE CONTINENT.



"SAY WILLIE, WE'LL NEED A HOWITZER TO SMASH THAT."

AND IT MIGHT BE USED, AFTER THE WAR, TO FEED "WINDY BILL" ON.



In many parts of G.S.W.A. there was scarcely sufficient water even to drink, and the efforts of the men to get a wash were often rather pathetic.

(1)
WHEN HE
ENLISTS
HE USUALLY
HAS A
SUBSTANTIAL
AND WELL-
GROOMED
HEAD OF
HAIR, BUT
HIS FACE IS
INNOCENT OF
OTHER
"FITTINGS"



(2)
WHEN
CAMPAIGNING
BEGINS, HIS
LUXURIOUS CROP
HAS TO GO, AND
TO COMPENSATE
HIMSELF HE
ALLOWS IT
TO SPROUT
DOWN BELOW.



(3)
HERE WE SEE
HIS BEARD, ETC.
WELL-ESTABLISHED.
AT THIS STAGE
HE MERELY
TOLERATES IT,
BUT DOES NOT
IMAGINE THAT
IT IMPROVES
HIS PERSONAL
APPEARANCE.
(WE AGREE)



(4)
HIS BEARD
IS NOW
FULL FLEDGED
AND HE SPENDS
HIS SPARE
TIME FINGERING
IT LOVINGLY,
AND WONDERING
WHAT THE GIRLS
AT HOME WOULD
SAY IF THEY WERE
TO SEE HIM
NOW.
(WE WONDER)



"FACE-
FITTINGS"
AT THE
FRONT."

(AND SIDES)

MANY OF OUR
BOYS HAVE NOW
RETURNED FROM
THE FRONT, WITH
A SMALL TUFT
OF HAIR ON THE
UPPER LIP. THE
UNINITIATED
IMAGINE THAT
IT IS THE
RESULT OF
CULTIVATION
AND FORCING.
WE HASTEN TO
DISILLUSION
THEM. THAT
SMALL TUFT,
(SOMETIMES CALLED
THE "MILITARY"
MOUSTACHE), HAS
NOT BEEN "BUILT
UP," BUT IS
THE RESULT OF
A "PARING DOWN"
PROCESS

(5)
NOW WE SEE
HIM AT A
SADDER STAGE
HE BELIEVES
THAT A BEARD
SUITS HIM!!!
ACCORDINGLY
HE CLIPS
THE "WINGS"
AND TRIMS
IT GENERALLY,
TO IMPROVE
THE EFFECT.



(6)
FROM THIS
STAGE ONWARD
HIS DEGENERATION
IS RAPID, UNLESS
HE POSSESSES
MUCH MORAL
STRENGTH. MUCH
OF HIS SPARE
TIME IS SPENT
IN "PRUNING"
DOWN THE
GROWTH TO MAKE
HIMSELF MORE
BEAUTIFUL.



(7)
THE HABIT
HAS NOW
REACHED THE
MALIGNANT
STAGE. WHENEVER
HE IS OFF DUTY,
HE TRIES A NEW
STYLE, AND STUDIES
THE EFFECT
IN A GLASS,
AND ON HIS
FRIENDS. (IF HE
STILL HAS ANY)

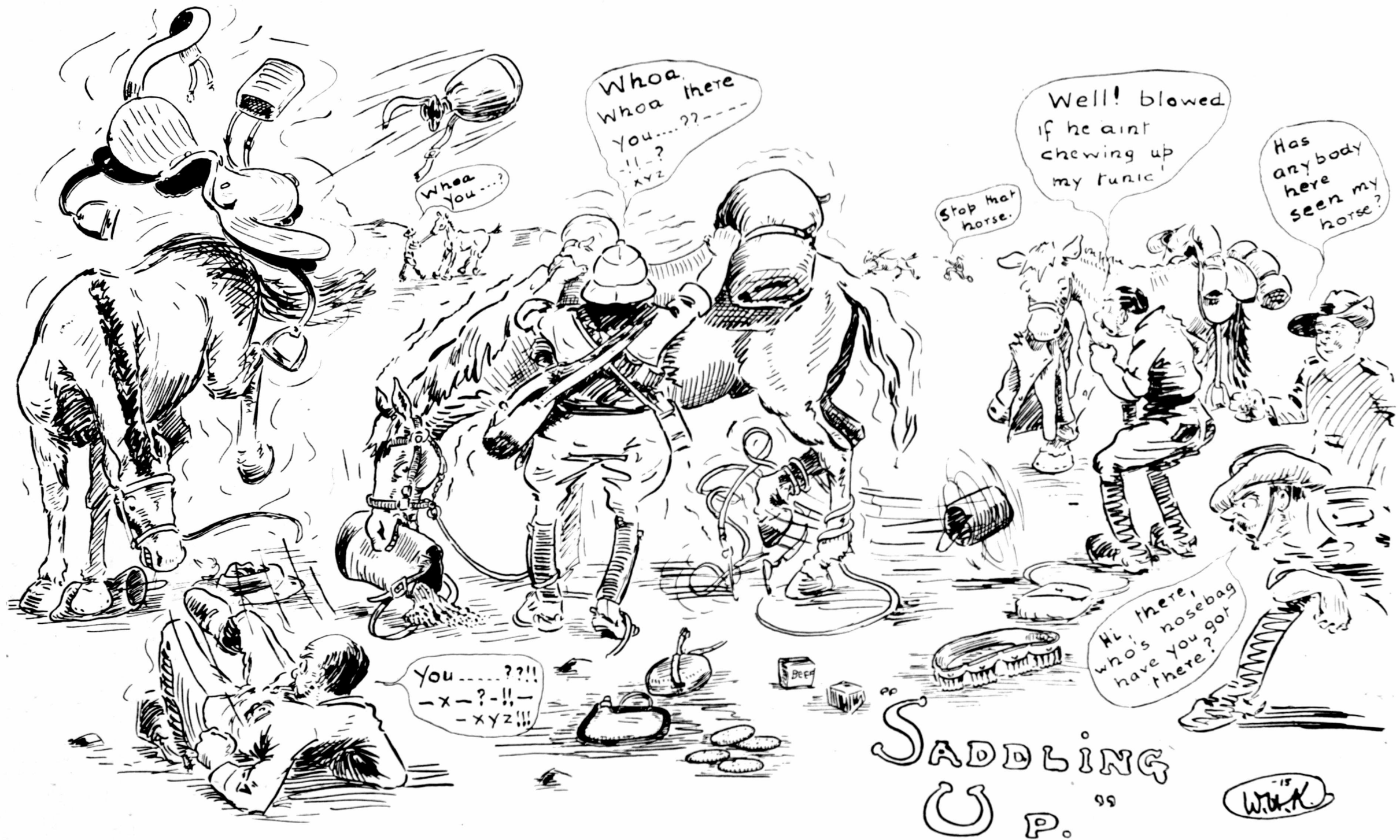


(8)
"THE LAST, AND
SADDEST STAGE
OF ALL".
DEGENERATION
COMPLETE.
HE RETURNS FROM
THE FRONT, BUT
IS STILL UNDER THE
DELUSION THAT
FACE TRIMMINGS
SUIT HIM, WHEREUPON
HE CULTIVATES THE
"MILITARY" MOUSTACHE



W.H.K.
-15

One of the features of the campaign was the cult of beards and whiskers by the men. Many men returned with a military moustache. The uninitiated imagine that this moustache has been carefully grown, or "built up." We hasten to disillusion them. The military moustache is the result of a careful and continuous "paring down" process. It is only a "relic" of what was once a luxurious growth.



When a mounted regiment gets the order to "Saddle Up" the camp presents a very animated appearance. If the men have camped at one spot for several days, their kit sometimes gets mixed. Mutual recriminations follow. Occasionally the horse takes a hand, and does its best to confuse things; very soon, however, order takes the place of chaos, and the men are ready for the order, "Walk March."

An excellent method
is to peg your kit
down before
leaving it.



Burying it is
a good scheme!



Others find it
safer to carry it
about with them.



At night time it pays to sleep on
your belongings, and then
with one eye always
open!!



The sort of
man who
might manage
to keep his kit

66
Pinching.
99

AND HOW TO
PREVENT IT.

W.A.K.

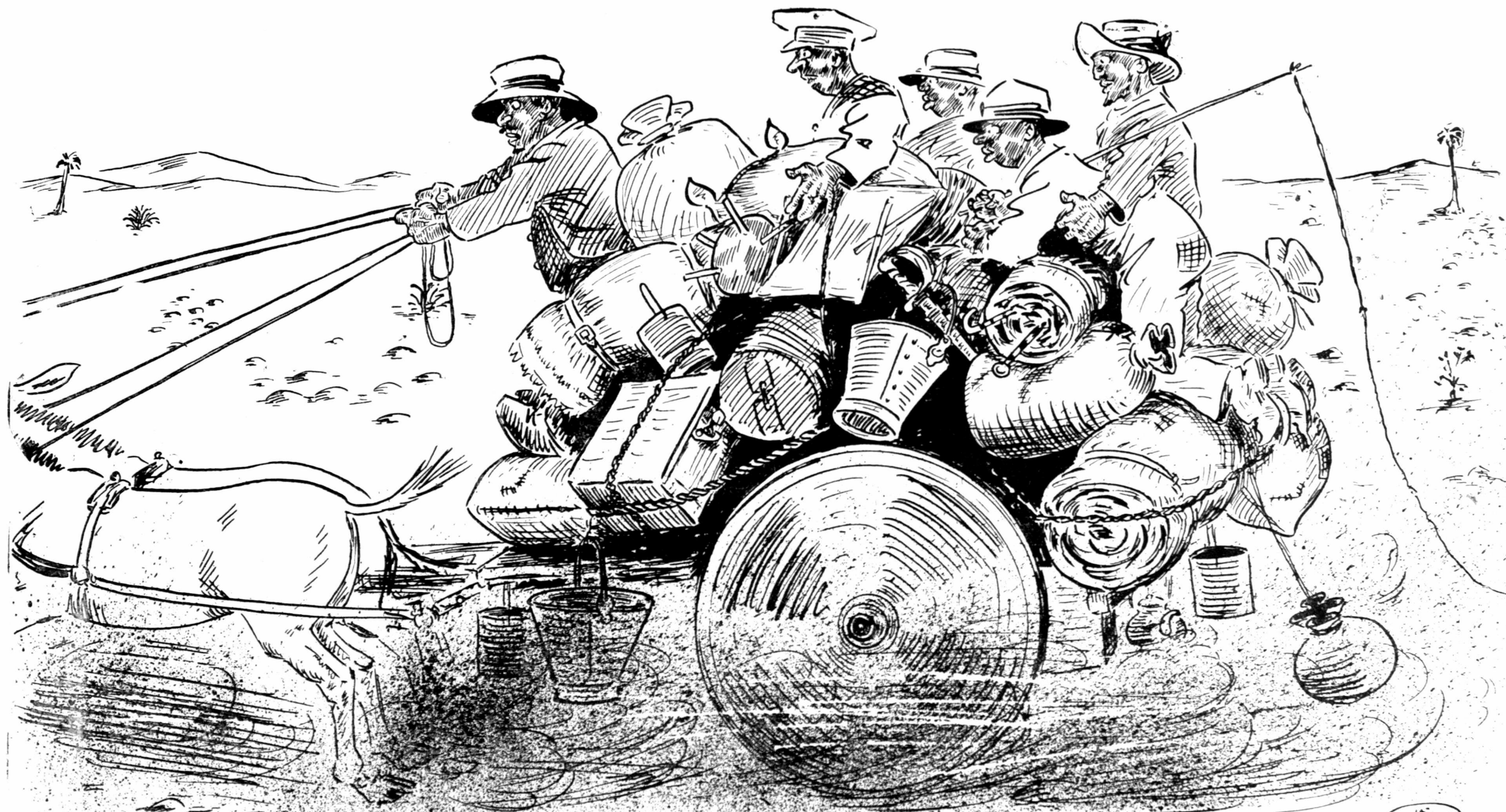
It should be noted that things are never *lost* on trek; they are always "pinched." A Tommy develops a sort of sixth sense, which enables him to keep in touch with his belongings—to a certain extent, at least. There is an unwritten, but well recognised, law in the ranks to the effect that if someone pinches *your* kit, you must "pinch" someone else's. It is considered more advisable to "pinch" from some *other* squadron, or, if possible, regiment. The blame is always attached to the first offender, the blame for all subsequent pinching being put to his account.



The arrival of "comforts" in camp is always welcome. Articles are generally drawn for. The result is often rather funny. The big man draws an article which appears to have been made for an infant, and vice versa. Tobacco in any form is always welcome, being a change from grass, leaves, and other things which have been used as an "emergency" smoke.



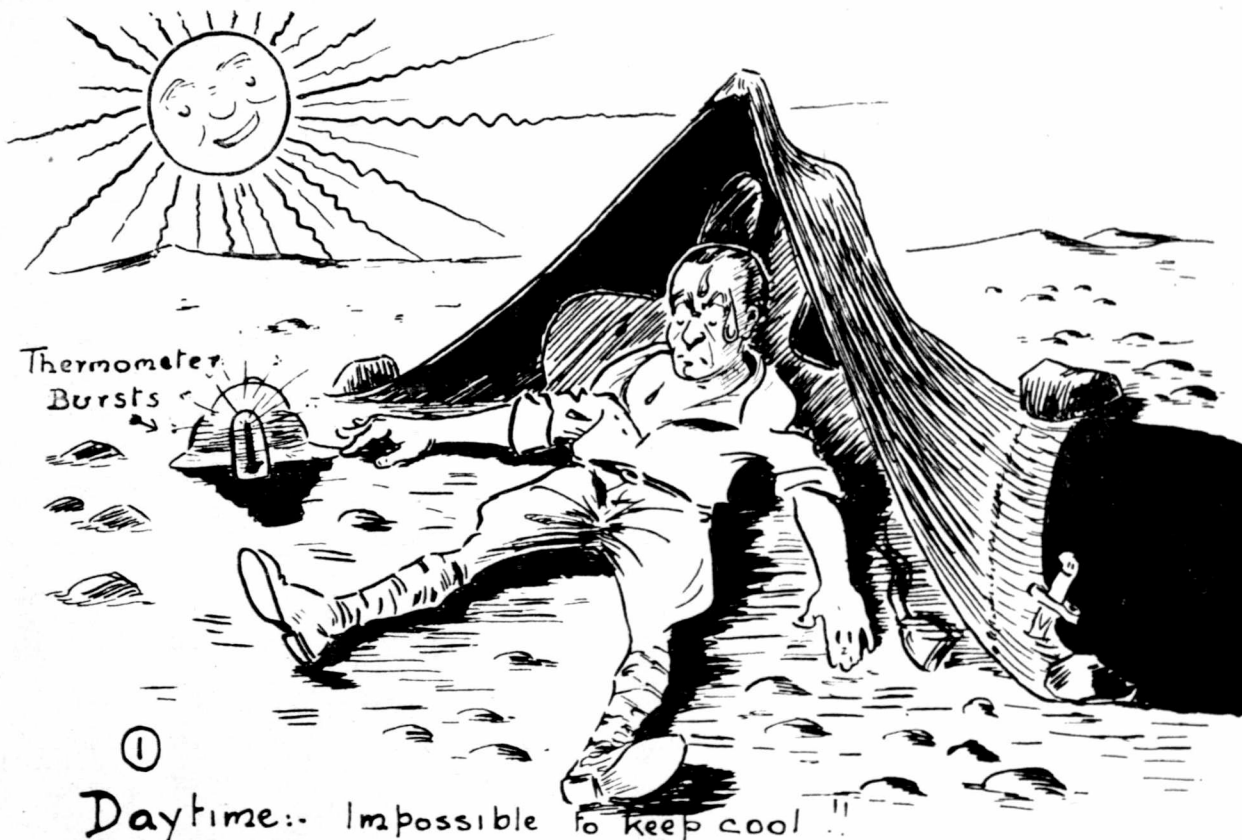
As is only too well known, the men often had to go on the shortest of rations, and the difficulty of making a very small supply go round among a lot of hungry men is illustrated above. The issue of rations was generally the subject of caustic if good-humoured remarks.



"THE WATER CART"

15
W.A.K.

When the mounted brigade made a dash inland the transport was left behind, but the water carts generally managed to keep up with the column. These water carts were often packed with kit, etc., belonging to the staff.



DAY
and
NIGHT,
in G. S. W. A.

④ Suggested costume for day time.
(We regret the interference of the censor.)



British South-West Africa, in winter, is a land of extremes in temperature. The days are generally hot, and the nights bitterly cold.

Loot. (Bethanien, C.S.W.A.).



The above picture gives an idea of what happens when the troops go looking for “souvenirs.”



Going into action at Berseba.

Berseba was attacked at daybreak, the troops having ridden all night. Men and horses alike forgot their fatigue in the excitement of rushing the town. Some squadrons dismounted and advanced on foot. The huns did not wait to give battle, but fled after firing a few shots. Many wagons and some prisoners were captured here. A humorous feature of the charge was the evident anxiety of the native drivers of the water-carts to be in at the death. The water-carts rattled and bumped along at top speed, and entered the town triumphantly with the troops. Even the ammunition and baggage mules were infected with the excitement.

“WATER FATIGUE”



“ Bucket ” pumps are generally used in G.S.W.A. for obtaining water. It is hard work turning these, and often the amount of water obtained is very small in proportion to the amount of energy expended.



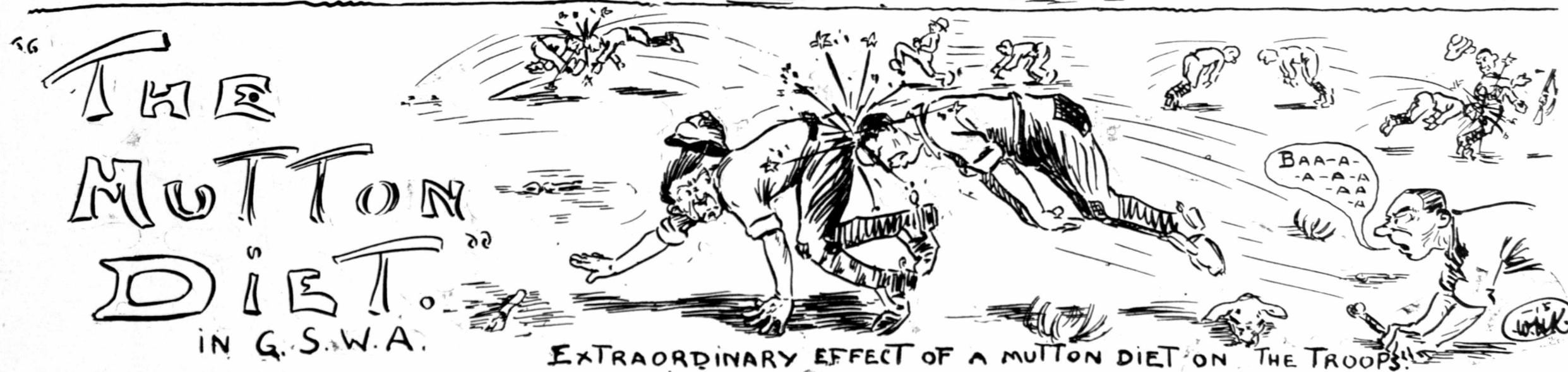
Whenever it was possible the troops endeavoured to buy food, i.e., eggs, milk, fowls, etc., from the natives. The language was the great stumbling block. It sounds like an endless succession of "clicks." The natives preferred to barter for tobacco and foodstuffs, of which the troops had very little. If you asked for anything the natives shrugged their shoulders and said "Ciya" (pronounced with a click), meaning "finished." This, at least, is one of the two thousand meanings it seems to have.



When the troops left the base horse rations were very scarce, and latterly the horses had to depend on what they could find, in the shape of grass or sticks, to keep alive.



"On trek" the men generally club together in messes, and cook together, using as large a pot as they can conveniently carry. One sees to the water, one fetches wood, another one cooks, a fourth attends to horses, and there is generally one who gives advice and criticism.



When the troops dashed inland, the transport was left far behind, and for many weeks the men lived almost entirely on meat, generally mutton. Often they had not even salt to flavour it.



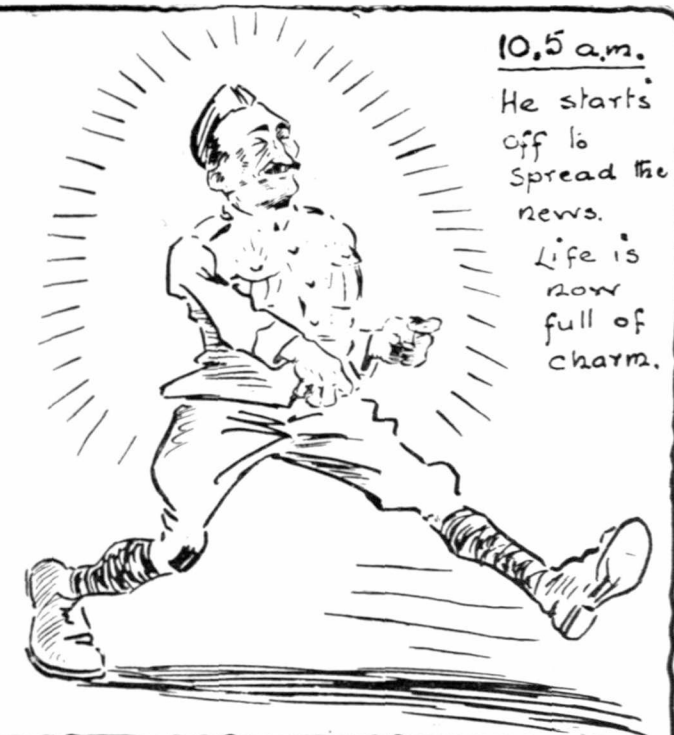
"THE MAN WHO HAD A CIGARETTE"

Cigarettes were very dear—in fact, almost priceless—in the latter stages of the campaign, and the man who possessed one was looked upon with envy and awe.

9.0 a.m. Everything seems gloomy.
No fresh news.
Life is not
worth living.



10 a.m.
He
Overhears
Rumour.



10.5 a.m.
He starts
off to
spread the
news.
Life is
now
full of
charm.

R
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M
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12 noon. He has by now "electrified" the Camp.

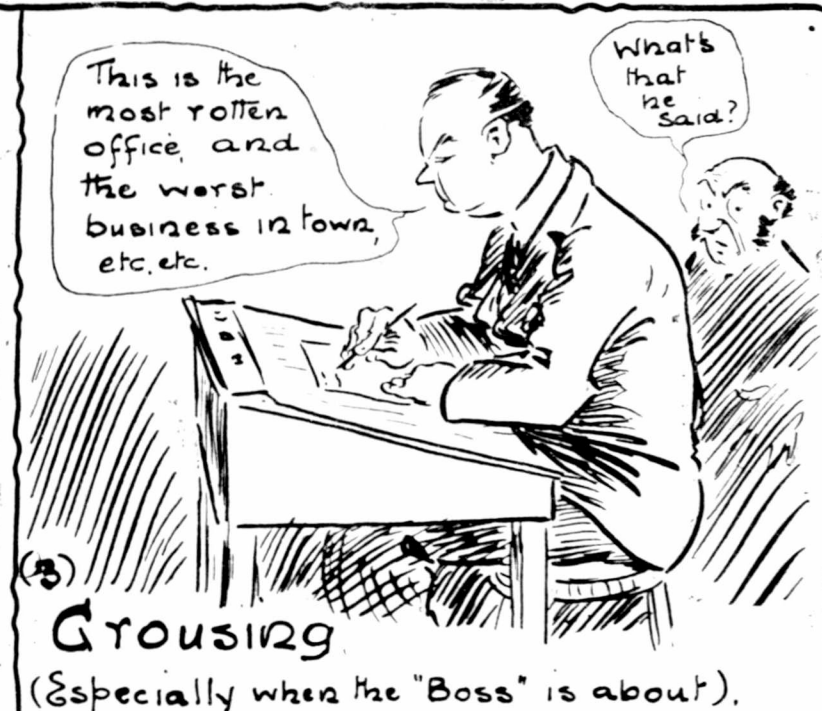
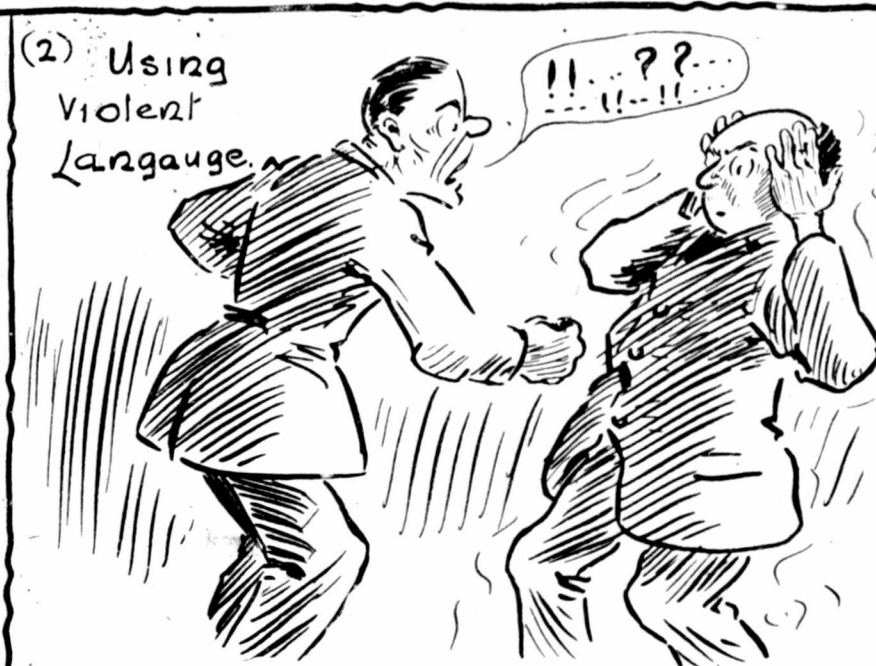
1.0 p.m. The
Career of his
rumour is cut
short. He
hears another
and more
startling
rumour.
This keeps
him busy
for the
rest of
the day.



Reliable news is always scarce on the veld, and rumour takes its place. Men listen eagerly to the latest rumour, and pass it on, adding to, or subtracting from, it according to their fancy. The man who has "the latest" is an important individual. For a rumour to bear weight it must be represented as having come directly, or indirectly, from Headquarters.



Most of the troops belonging to the Central Force, after having smashed up the Huns at Gibeon, were not required further, and went back to the coast by wagons. Riding in a springless wagon at a furious pace over stony roads is not exactly an ideal way of travelling.



Things we shall have to stop doing when we return to Civilian life once more.

We who have lived in the wilds for many months become "primitive" men. There are many habits and figures of speech which must be dropped when we return to civilisation once more. Above are some of them.